

Amherst Recycling & Refuse Management Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 22, 2012 • Department of Public Works • Conference Room, 4:30PM

In Attendance: Sue M., John R., Brenda D., Cristina, C., Laurel D., Sue Cairn, Susan W.

Visitors: Craig Goff (interested in possible committee membership), Aaron Hayden (Select Board Member)

Unanimous approval of June minutes as amended (Susan W. will make corrections).

Foam-Free Subcommittee update:

Subcommittee made trip to Smith Paper in Greenfield to learn about alternatives to foam containers. They will help by providing samples to use when meeting with restaurant personnel. It was suggested that Tony Maroulis (Chamber of Commerce director) and Jerry Jolly (Owner of the Pub) meet with the Committee and the distributor. League of Women Voters of Amherst members are actively involved in the process. Susan has put together info packets to be used during restaurant visits (Interview Sheet, letter to be sent before visit and provided again during visit, "Ten Reasons to Avoid Foam", info on what subcommittee is doing, talking points). Gabe Owen, an Amherst College volunteer, is doing some research to help in preparing the warrant for Town Meeting.

Board of Health is unsure of the public health impact. We will provide them with more information. National Toxicology Program report states that styrene may leach from containers. Need draft of article for warrant by October 1, 2012. Cynthia Brubaker has been working with a draft created several years ago. We will meet with Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director, at Town Hall. Subcommittee members will be visiting restaurants soon.

We will need sample bags before the visits begin.

Review final Landfill Alternatives Report: This will be sent to committee members soon.

First Day Celebration on the Common, Wed. 8/28/12, 5:30: Recycling Committee has been invited to have an info table. It was suggested that the committee actually provide receptacles for recycling/compost/trash. John, Sue M., Sue C., Brenda, & Susan W. will be there.

School Compost Coaching and other school related topics: Need volunteers for three elementary schools, about 11:30-1:00, August 30, 31, September 4, 6, 10. Volunteers will need a CORI check. Committee members will help to find volunteers. Sue M. will check with ACTV about having a new video made about waste sorting at the schools. Sue C. will contact the PTO blogs. Betsy Dinger at the Middle School wants Susan to come and talk with staff about how to improve recycling there. Trash-free Lunch Day will be held in November.

Zero Waste Discussion: Aaron Hayden has suggested that we review waste disposal changes enacted in the late 1990's. Education of Amherst residents will be needed regarding the problem (drowning in trash) and what can be done to manage this. Motion to hold a dinner meeting during September (schedule through Doodle, a moderator/mediator will be sought, Susan W. will send background info).

New Business:

- Paint will not be accepted during the September 29th Hazardous Waste Collection Event. People should call Susan W. if they have paint to dispose of. People are encouraged to pool hazardous waste

across households. Susan is trying to create an on-line system for registering for 15 minute hazardous waste collection appointments.

- “Notify Me” system for email and text message notices from the town. Susan is setting up two alerts: Transfer Station info only, All Solid Waste information.
- MA Department of Public Health has banned sharps (needles) from landfills. Cooley Dickinson was cited for unspecified solid waste non-compliance and as a result has to support Amherst, Northampton, and Hadley in collecting and disposing of sharps.
- A letter from Rebecca Hull to the editor was published in the Bulletin on July 27, 2012 voicing concerns about DPW practices including the lack of a smaller bag option.
- UMASS will be changing to single stream recycling on campus. This is likely to cause confusion with recycling in town. The Committee will need to decide how to respond and provide education and support at a future meeting.
- South Hadley Landfill has received state permission to expand vertically, but a crack has developed in the existing vertical berm. Now they are requesting permission to expand horizontally. Smells have developed. Estimated to close in 4-7 years.
- Next meeting we will need to set dates for year.